

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Title:	Automated Equipment Management and Reservation System	Attorney Docket No. 12521-014
Inventor:	Royer et al.	Examiner: Shaawat, Mussa A.
Serial No.:	09/826,083	Group Art Unit: 3627
Filing Date:	April 4, 2001	Conf. No.: 3868

**DECLARATION UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.131**

We declare as follows:

**Background and Asserted Prior Art**

1. We are inventors of the subject matter claimed in U.S. Application No. 09/826,083 and entitled Automated Equipment Management and Reservation System.

2. We are employed by the assignee of the present application, U-Haul International, Inc. ("U-Haul") and were so employed at all times relevant to this declaration.

3. We understand that the Examiner responsible for the above-referenced application has asserted as prior art a published patent application to Hafen et al., U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US 2003/0023453 ("Hafen"), which claims priority from U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 60/308,778, filed on July 30, 2001.

4. We understand that the Examiner responsible for the above-referenced application has also asserted as prior art a published patent application to Weinstock et al., U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US 2005/0021378 ("Weinstock"), which is a continuation-in-part of and claims priority from U.S. Patent Application No. 09/694,050, filed on October 20, 2000, which a continuation-in-part of and claims priority from U.S. Patent Application No. 09/641,820, filed on August 18, 2000.

5. Our work in conceiving and reducing to practice the invention described and claimed in the above-referenced patent application occurred before June 14, 2000, as further explained below.

6. U-Haul's business includes the rental of a variety of moving-related equipment, such as trucks, trailers, and tow dollies.

7. To facilitate the management of its rental equipment business, U-Haul organized several marketing companies having different geographic territories. These marketing companies are wholly-owned subsidiaries of U-Haul International, Inc. Each marketing company utilizes a number of U-Haul rental centers and dealers who maintain and provide equipment to customers at their various locations.

8. Customers wishing to rent equipment from U-Haul may make a reservation directly with a rental center or dealer, or through a centralized sales and reservations department within U-Haul.

9. The marketing companies utilize numerous rental centers and dealers to provide equipment to customers. As a result, each marketing company has created a traffic department with responsibility for managing reservations and the availability of equipment at the various rental centers and dealers.

10. Because of the large number of reservations, types and amounts of equipment, rental centers and dealers, at one time the various traffic departments used "white boards" on which they manually tracked the status of reservations and the availability of equipment at the rental centers and dealers within their purview. As new reservations came in and as equipment was dispatched from or received by a particular center or dealer, the white boards had to be updated to reflect changes to the reservations and inventory.

#### **Development of the Claimed Invention**

11. Before June 14, 2000, we conceived and reduced to practice an equipment and reservation system embodying the invention described and claimed in the present application. The system was implemented using a computer program referred to as "MicroTraffic."

12. Prior to June 14, 2000, the MicroTraffic program was loaded onto servers maintained and controlled by the traffic departments of various U-Haul marketing companies. Also before that date, the program was functional and the equipment and reservation system worked for its intended purpose. At all times prior to the filing date of the present application, MicroTraffic was used only by U-Haul employees and was not used by the rental centers or dealers. Only U-Haul employees within the marketing companies could access terminals displaying the various user interfaces to the program.

13. The MicroTraffic program was modified at various times prior to June 14, 2000. Initial versions of the program were written in the Foxpro database language. However, later versions were written in Visual Foxpro. Attached as Exhibits A to F hereto are true and correct copies of a variety of documents describing the operation of the Foxpro version of MicroTraffic that was last used before the conversion to Visual Foxpro.

14. Attached as Exhibit A hereto is a true and correct copy of a directory listing of the set of files which comprised the last version of the Foxpro MicroTraffic program. The directory listing was printed on February 10, 2004. However, it shows the date on which each file comprising the Foxpro version of MicroTraffic was last revised. As Exhibit A indicates, the files entitled "findrecv.sct," "findres.sct," and "findresv.sct," were last modified on October 22, 1999, indicating that the listed files comprise the version of MicroTraffic which was loaded onto marketing company servers and in use by U-Haul on that date.

15. The version of MicroTraffic which was in use as of October 22, 1999 was rebuilt from the files listed in Exhibit A to create an executable file capable of generating the various user screens. Printouts of the user screens are attached as Exhibits B to F hereto and are described as follows:

a. Attached as Exhibit B hereto is a true and correct copy of a print out of the MicroTraffic main menu.

b. Attached as Exhibit C hereto is a true and correct copy of the MicroTraffic Reservation Summary Screen. The dates of the reservations are provided on the left hand side. The specific dates shown on Exhibit C are based on the rebuild date of February 10, 2004. The rows identify the various types of equipment reserved on each day. The "site scope" feature shown in the upper left hand corner of Exhibit C allowed the user to generate a reservation summary for the entire marketing company ("MCO"), or for a particular city, route or dealer. The "reservation scope" feature shown in Exhibit C allowed the user to generate reservation summaries for confirmed reservations, tentative reservations, and canceled reservations, respectively.

c. Attached as Exhibit D hereto is a true and correct copy of the MicroTraffic Reservation Summary screen in which the "selection scope" feature has been selected, resulting in the appearance of a drop-down menu. As the drop-down menu indicates, users could create a summary for all reservations, for in-town reservations only or for one-way reservations only.

d. Attached as Exhibit E hereto is a true and correct copy of the MicroTraffic Equipment at Site Screen. The rows identify different types of equipment by two-letter designations. The columns identify various sites within the purview of the relevant marketing company. Each entry in the table represents the amount of a particular type of equipment available at each site.

e. Attached as Exhibit F hereto is a true and correct copy of the MicroTraffic Equipment at Site Screen with the site scope and status features selected to show that the user can tailor the display to identify the available equipment designated for one-way and in-town use.

### **Amended Claims Reduced To Practice Before June 14, 2000**

#### **Currently Amended Claim 1**

16. An exemplary embodiment of pending claim 1 reciting “a method of rental equipment management for a plurality of rental locations on a network of a plurality of dealerships, the network having at least one computer-server for communicating with users, said method comprising the steps of: the users of the plurality of dealerships accessing the computer-server of the plurality of dealerships in order to access rental equipment inventory information for the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships in order to assist customers of the plurality of rental locations” is illustrated in Exhibits A, B, C, D, E, and F.

17. An exemplary embodiment of pending claim 1 reciting “via a computer-terminal, displaying a reservation summary having reservation information pertaining to the type of rental equipment reserved and the date of reservation for each piece of rental equipment for a plurality of customer reservations of the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships” is illustrated in Exhibits A, B, C, and D.

18. An exemplary embodiment of pending claim 1 reciting “via the computer-server, tracking and searching rental equipment inventory information including the number of pieces of rental equipment available for in-town rental and the number of pieces of rental equipment in-town but not available for rental for each rental location for managing rental equipment availability at the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships” is illustrated in Exhibits A, B, E, and F.

19. An exemplary embodiment of pending claim 1 reciting “wherein via the computer-terminal communicating with the computer-server, each user can search and display

the number of pieces of rental equipment available for in-town rental and the number of pieces of rental equipment in-town but not available for rental for each rental location of the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships” is illustrated in Exhibits A, B, E, and F.

20. An exemplary embodiment of pending claim 1 reciting “wherein via the computer-server the rental equipment inventory information for each rental location in the plurality of dealerships is accessible via the network by the plurality of dealerships” is illustrated in Exhibits A, B, E, and F.

**Currently Amended Claim 18**

21. An exemplary embodiment of pending claim 1 reciting “a method of rental equipment management for a plurality of rental locations, comprising the steps of: the plurality of rental locations on a network of a plurality of dealerships, wherein users of the plurality of dealerships accessing a computer-server of the plurality of dealerships in order to access rental equipment inventory information for the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships in order to assist customers of the plurality of rental locations” is illustrated in Exhibits A, B, E, and F.

22. An exemplary embodiment of pending claim 1 reciting “via a computer-terminal, displaying on a screen in communication with a computer a reservation summary having reservation information pertaining to the type of rental equipment reserved and the date of reservation for each piece of rental equipment for a plurality of customer reservations of the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships” is illustrated in Exhibits A, B, C, and D.

23. An exemplary embodiment of pending claim 1 reciting “via the computer-server, tracking and searching rental equipment inventory information including the number of pieces of rental equipment available for in-town rental and the number of pieces of rental equipment in-town but not available for rental for each rental location for managing rental equipment availability at the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships” is illustrated in Exhibits A, B, E, and F.

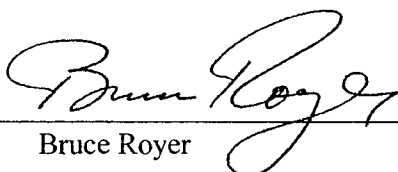
24. An exemplary embodiment of pending claim 1 reciting “wherein via the computer-terminal communicating with the computer-server, each user can search and display the number of pieces of rental equipment available for in-town rental and exclude the number of

pieces of rental equipment in-town but not available for rental for each rental location of the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships” is illustrated in Exhibits A, B, E, and F.

25. An exemplary embodiment of pending claim 1 reciting “via the computer-server, making the reservation information and the rental equipment inventory information for each rental location in the plurality of dealerships accessible via the network by the plurality of dealerships” is illustrated in Exhibits A, B, C, D, E, and F.

26. We further declare that all statements made herein of our own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the above-referenced application or any patent issuing thereon.

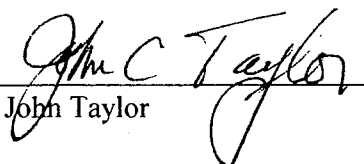
Date: 5-28-2010

By:   
Bruce Royer

Date: 6-4-2010

By:   
Renee Royer

Date: 6-4-2010

By:   
John Taylor

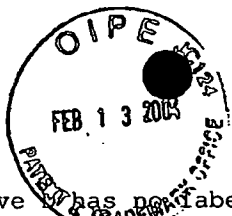


Exhibit A

files.txt

Volume in drive C: has no label.  
Volume Serial Number is 8CDD-0929

Directory of D:\IRV2\IRV\TRAFFIC\TRAFFIC\OLD

02/10/04	12:00p	<DIR>	.
02/10/04	12:00p	<DIR>	..
06/10/97	08:15a		3,220 avail.frt
06/10/97	08:15a		15,227 avail.frx
09/30/98	12:47p		3,583 cellvuel.frt
09/30/98	12:47p		14,657 cellvuel.frx
07/31/96	12:17p		879 clipbrd.sct
07/31/96	12:17p		4,427 clipbrd.scx
08/25/98	05:44p		2,092 dumpres.frt
08/25/98	05:44p		7,817 dumpres.frx
06/22/98	10:25a		58,797 ei_date.sct
11/14/97	11:54a		71,940 ei_date.scx
10/10/96	08:44p		32,623 ent_info.sct
10/10/96	08:44p		22,331 ent_info.scx
01/21/98	11:50a		13,089 eqselctr.sct
01/21/98	11:50a		7,411 eqselctr.scx
04/30/96	11:04a		6,687 eq_info.sct
04/30/96	11:04a		26,061 eq_info.scx
08/06/97	08:24a		6,093 eq_seek.sct
08/06/97	08:24a		10,395 eq_seek.scx
02/04/99	01:47p		50,214 eq_site2.sct
02/04/99	01:47p		75,297 eq_site2.scx
08/13/98	02:27p		6,304 expin.frt
08/13/98	02:27p		14,942 expin.frx
08/30/99	03:05p		22,597 expin.sct
08/31/99	02:26p		5,173 expin.scx
09/26/96	02:37p		5,413 exp_in3.frt
09/26/96	02:37p		14,657 exp_in3.frx
02/10/04	12:00p		0 files.txt
08/06/97	08:30a		21,966 finddisp.sct
08/06/97	08:30a		14,871 finddisp.scx
10/22/99	11:16a		23,893 findrecv.sct
12/15/97	08:07a		14,871 findrecv.scx
10/22/99	11:15a		34,657 findres.sct
03/26/99	05:19p		17,109 findres.scx
10/22/99	11:16a		11,980 findresv.sct
08/06/97	08:23a		9,649 findresv.scx
03/18/99	11:45a		18,601 finequip.sct
08/27/98	12:42p		9,276 finequip.scx
01/21/98	11:50a		27,807 getnii.sct
01/21/98	11:50a		8,157 getnii.scx
08/06/97	08:22a		49,014 invsetup.sct
08/06/97	08:22a		26,807 invsetup.scx
12/01/97	01:51p		14,706 missing.sct
12/01/97	01:51p		10,395 missing.scx
05/25/99	01:27p		1,539 modinote.sct
05/25/99	01:27p		7,411 modinote.scx
08/31/99	02:26p		670,197 mtraffic.pjt
08/31/99	02:26p		16,394 mtraffic.pjx
11/02/98	03:01p		2,166 newpudat.sct
11/02/98	03:01p		5,173 newpudat.scx
04/29/99	03:59p		6,490 newpuloc.sct
11/02/98	03:00p		5,173 newpuloc.scx
06/10/97	11:35a		6,652 oneto31.frt

# Exhibit A

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files.txt
06/10/97 11:35a 29,192 oneto31.frx
08/25/99 03:30p 125,011 oneto31.sct
03/26/99 05:08p 95,066 oneto31.scx
10/06/98 12:49p 2,824 printnew.frt
10/06/98 12:49p 16,367 printnew.frx
05/10/99 09:35a 1,902 printnew.sct
05/10/99 09:35a 7,784 printnew.scx
08/12/99 12:08p 3,827 prnpost.sct
02/02/98 11:47a 4,054 prnpost.scx
08/31/98 03:47p 7,768 resfax.frt
08/31/98 03:47p 32,897 resfax.frx
08/15/97 09:31a 8,337 selctcsz.sct
08/15/97 09:31a 10,395 selctcsz.scx
09/29/98 10:52a 9,725 selctdlr.sct
11/14/97 03:22p 10,768 selctdlr.scx
05/18/99 02:47p 8,698 selctdst.sct
11/14/97 12:58p 8,157 selctdst.scx
08/19/98 09:51a 4,608 tmsmain.sct
08/19/98 09:51a 9,276 tmsmain.scx
04/14/99 09:28a 28,219 tms_disp.sct
06/08/98 08:57a 34,267 tms_disp.scx
03/10/99 12:16p 25,482 tms_recv.sct
02/02/98 02:08p 34,267 tms_recv.scx
01/11/99 09:44a 31,202 tms_resv.sct
09/01/98 01:10p 35,013 tms_resv.scx
03/31/97 03:21p 20,541 tow.sct
03/31/97 03:21p 22,704 tow.scx
04/30/99 09:53a 31,782 towing.sct
02/25/98 11:23a 23,450 towing.scx
05/25/99 01:30p 3,189 trfnotes.sct
05/25/99 01:30p 6,665 trfnotes.scx
08/12/99 04:03p 18,435 viewres.sct
08/12/99 04:03p 25,315 viewres.scx
10/17/96 02:57p 28,155 wishlist.sct
10/17/96 02:57p 24,569 wishlist.scx
89 File(s) 2,326,791 bytes
1,850,953,728 bytes free

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Exhibit B

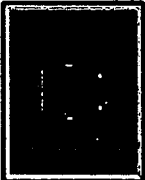

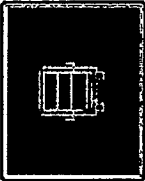
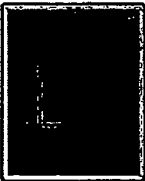

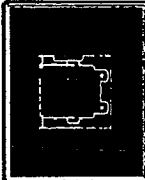

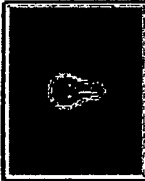
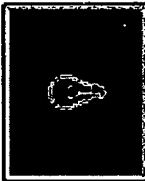
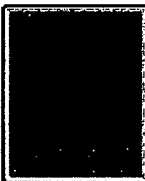
				
Dispatch	Receive	Reservation	1 - 31 Report	Print New Reservations
				
Equipment at Site	Expected In	Future Use	Future Use	Hookup Book

Exhibit C



Reservation Summary

SITE SCOPE		SITE SELECTION		RESERVATION SCOPE		SELECTION SCOPE	
MCO		B83049		Confirmed		One-Way	
						All	
						In-Town	
						One-Way	

Date	Equip Total	Model													
		TM	DC	EL	GH	JH	LV	LP	SW	MW	FW	ST	TD	TE	
02/10/04		2													
02/11/04					1										
02/12/04															
02/13/04															
02/14/04															
02/15/04															
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